

# Registered Nurses

A guide for newcomers to British Columbia



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## 1. Working as a Registered Nurse [NOC 3012]

### *Job Description*

Registered nurses care for patients in hospitals and other health care settings.

As a registered nurse, you perform the following duties:

- provide direct nursing care to patients
- work with a health team to put in place and evaluate patient care
- consult with patients and their families
- give medications and treatments as prescribed by a physician or according to established policies
- keep track of and report symptoms and changes in patients' conditions
- operate or check medical apparatus or equipment
- may help in surgery and other medical procedures
- may supervise other nursing staff
- may set up a patient discharge planning process
- may teach and counsel patients and their families on health-related issues alongside other health-care providers

Source:

- WorkBC Career Profile <https://www.workbc.ca/Jobs-Careers/Explore-Careers.aspx>  
[Search 3012]

### **Industry Overview**

Registered nurses are in demand throughout BC. There are currently not enough qualified nurses to meet this demand, particularly in northern and rural regions of the province.

You will find many job openings in specialty areas such as operating rooms, emergency rooms, and critical care, with many openings in the Lower Mainland. Experienced registered nurses are also needed to educate students and train new graduates.

The role of nurses is expanding as governments consider ways to control increasing health-care costs. One approach is offering basic care through a mixed team that consists of doctors and other health professionals. Nurses work alongside doctors and provide patient care in situations where a doctor's skills are not required. These workers are called nurse practitioners, which is a new, self-directed role for nurses.

### **Job Outlook in BC**



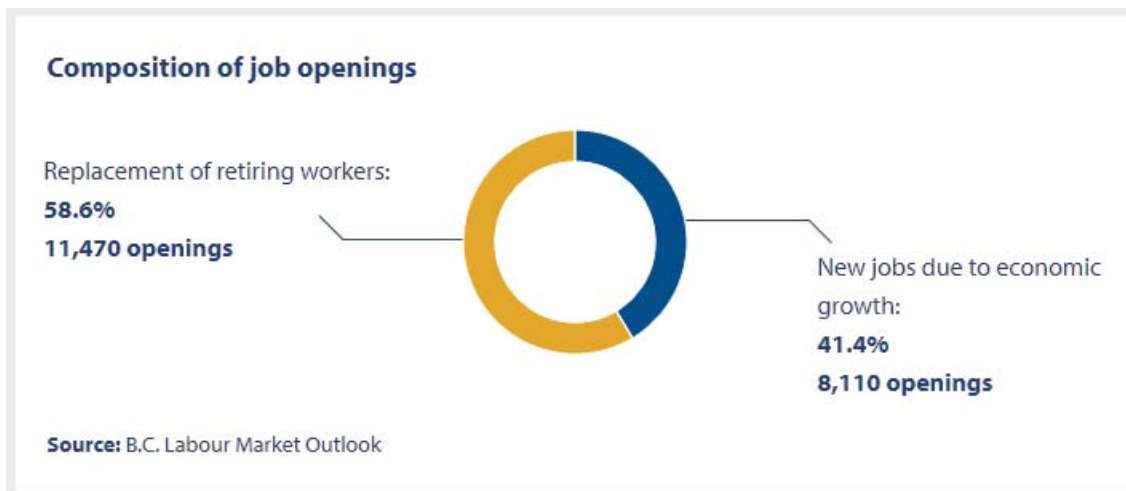


Chart from WorkBC

WorkBC provides job openings in BC regions from 2018 to 2028:

Region	Employment in 2018	Average Annual Employment Growth	Expected Number of Job Openings
Vancouver Island	9,400	1.6%	4,290
Lower Mainland / Southwest	29,200	1.6%	11,730
Thompson-Okanagan	5,280	1.6%	2,320
Kootenay	1,100	1.6%	480
Cariboo	1,450	1.0%	390
North Coast & Nechako	440	2.2%	180
Northeast	530	1.6%	180

You can learn more about working in BC from the following sources:

- **WorkBC Careers** <https://www.workbc.ca/Jobs-Careers/Explore-Careers.aspx>  
 [search 3012]
- **Career Cruising** (Profile for Nurse)  
 Available from the VPL Digital Library | Explore our Digital Library page  
<http://www.vpl.ca/digital-library/career-cruising/>

## ***Types of Employers***

Registered nurses work in many settings including:

- hospitals
- clinics
- residential care facilities
- doctors offices
- community health agencies
- patients' homes
- schools
- businesses and government offices

## ***Salary***

The median salary for registered nurses working full-time in BC is \$77,167 a year.

Job Bank Canada, Wage Reports, provides hourly wages for Nurses in BC regions:

Community/Area	Wages (\$/hour)		
	Low	Median	High
<b><u>British Columbia</u></b>	<b>25.00</b>	<b>38.00</b>	<b>43.65</b>
<u>Cariboo Region</u>	27.00	38.55	44.44
<u>Kootenay Region</u>	24.00	36.06	47.00
<u>Lower Mainland - Southwest Region</u>	25.00	38.00	43.50
<u>Nechako Region</u>	25.00	38.00	43.65
<u>North Coast Region</u>	25.00	38.00	43.65
<u>Northeast Region</u>	25.00	38.00	43.65
<u>Thompson--Okanagan Region</u>	25.25	40.32	43.25
<u>Vancouver Island and Coast Region</u>	24.00	38.00	44.00

Source: Job Bank Wage Report [http://www.jobbank.gc.ca/wage-outlook\\_search-eng.do?reportOption=wage](http://www.jobbank.gc.ca/wage-outlook_search-eng.do?reportOption=wage) [Search 3012]

You may belong to a union. This means that your wage rates and benefits are negotiated by union representatives on your behalf.

In addition to your salary, full-time registered nurses usually receive benefits, such as paid sick days, vacation time, and dental coverage.

Sources: WorkBC & Career Cruising

### ***Working Hours***

You typically work 8- to 12-hour shifts, usually on rotation, including weekends, evenings and holidays.

On average, full-time nurses work 36 to 40 hours per week. Part-time work is quite common.

## 2. Skills, Education and Experience

### ***Skills***

- excellent communication skills
- good problem-solving and decision making abilities
- good judgment
- patience
- excellent interpersonal skills
- ability to multi-task in a complex and fast-paced environment
- ability to work with others
- ability to handle high levels of stress
- compassion, dependability and maturity

### ***Education and Experience***

To work as a registered nurse you require:

- completion of a recognized bachelor's degree in nursing
- successful completion of the Canadian Registered Nurse Exam
- registration with the British Columbia College of Nursing Professionals
- additional academic training or experience *may be required* to specialize in a specific area of nursing

### ***Qualifications***

***This occupation is regulated in British Columbia.***

To work as a registered nurse in British Columbia you must be registered with the *British Columbia College of Nursing Professionals (BCCNP)*

For information on registration see:

- **British Columbia College of Nursing Professionals**  
[https://www.bccnp.ca/Registration/RN\\_NP/RNApplication/Pages/Default.aspx](https://www.bccnp.ca/Registration/RN_NP/RNApplication/Pages/Default.aspx)

### ***Internationally Educated Nurses***

If you were educated as a nurse outside of Canada you may be eligible to work as a registered nurse in British Columbia.

This involves the following steps:

- apply to the *National Nursing Assessment Service* (<https://www.nnas.ca/>)
- submit the required documents in order to complete an assessment of your education and nursing practice
- demonstrate English language proficiency
- complete a criminal history record search
- apply to the *College of Registered Nurses of BC*
- you may be asked to complete a test of your nursing knowledge by completing the *substantially equivalent competency assessment*
- write and pass the *National Council Licensure Examination for RNs*

For more information see:

- **Registration for International Nurses**  
[https://www.bccnp.ca/Registration/RN\\_NP/RNApplication/InternationalEN/Pages/Default.aspx](https://www.bccnp.ca/Registration/RN_NP/RNApplication/InternationalEN/Pages/Default.aspx)

**Provisional Registration** is granted to qualified applicants with outstanding registration requirements (for example, you have yet to write and pass the national nursing exam). Provisional Registration allows you to work as a nurse in BC while you are meeting these requirements.

For more information see:

- **Provisional Registration**  
[https://www.bccnp.ca/Registration/RN\\_NP/Provisional/Pages/Default.aspx](https://www.bccnp.ca/Registration/RN_NP/Provisional/Pages/Default.aspx)



### 3. Finding Jobs

You'll find job advertisements in local newspapers and electronic sources, as well as through professional associations' publications.

#### ***Local Newspapers***

You can look at the *Vancouver Sun* and *The Province* at Vancouver Public Library for free. Check the job postings daily, the careers section in the *Vancouver Sun* on Wednesdays and Saturdays, and in *The Province* on Sundays.

#### ***Job White Pages***

- Available in print at the Central Library or online from the VPL Digital Library:  
<http://www.vpl.ca/digital-library/jobfreewaycom>  
*Access at VPL locations only*

#### ***Online Job Postings***

- **BC's Provincial Health Authorities**  
BC's health authorities provide health services in all BC regions
  - **Vancouver Coastal Health Authority**  
<https://careers.vch.ca/>
  - **Fraser Health Authority**  
<https://careers.fraserhealth.ca/search-jobs.aspx>
  - **Interior Health Authority**  
<https://www.interiorhealth.ca/careers/Pages/default.aspx>
  - **Northern Health Authority**  
<https://careers.northernhealth.ca/>
  - **Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA)**  
<http://www.phsa.ca/careers>
  - **Island Health Authority**  
<https://www.islandhealth.ca/>

- **HealthMatch BC**

<https://www.healthmatchbc.org/Jobs-in-BC/Find-a-Job>

- **Indeed.com**

<http://ca.indeed.com>

Find jobs posted on a multitude of company career sites and job boards

### ***Professional Associations' Career Resources***

- **Canadian Nurses Association - Nursing Careers**

<https://www.nursingcareerscanada.ca/>

### ***Identifying the Right Position***

When you browse job advertisements, you'll find a range of different job titles that are relevant.

For registered nurses, look for these related job titles:

- Clinical nurse
- Community health nurse
- Intensive care nurse
- Nursing consultant
- Occupational health nurse
- Public health nurse
- R.N.

Source: NOC <http://noc.esdc.gc.ca/English/noc/welcome.aspx?ver=16>

### ***Creating a List of Potential Employers***

You can use directories to produce lists of employers in the nursing and healthcare sector in Vancouver or the Lower Mainland. Contact them directly to find out if they're hiring.

- **Directory of Canadian Healthcare Personnel**

Available at the Central Library

362.11025 C21a

- **Guide to Canadian Health Care Facilities**

Available at the Central Library

362.105 C212ca

- **Reference Canada**

Available from the VPL Digital Library:

<http://www.vpl.ca/digital-library/reference-canada>

Click on "Start Search" beside Canadian Businesses, then select the "Advanced Search" button. Select both "Keyword/SIC/NAICS" under Business Type and "City" under Geography. In the top search box enter "health care" or "hospital" and click SEARCH. Select the appropriate headings. Lower down, select the Province, choose the cities, and click the "View Results" button.

*NOTE: You can access this database from a Library computer or from home. If you are using a computer from outside the Library, you will need a Vancouver Public Library card.*

## 4. Applying for a Job

In Canada, employers usually expect to receive a resume or curriculum vitae and a cover letter that identifies the position you are applying for and summarizes your relevant experience.

Use the library catalogue, <https://vpl.bibliocommons.com/> to find books on writing resumes and cover letters specific to your industry.

To learn about applying for jobs in Canada, use the following guides which are available in print at the Central Library or online at <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca/>.

- **Writing Resumes and Cover Letters**

Go to <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca>

[Search Writing Resumes and Cover Letters]

- **Getting Canadian Work Experience**

Go to <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca>

[Search Getting Canadian Work Experience]

- **Networking for Employment**

Go to <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca>

[Search Networking for Employment]

- **Learn More About Working in BC and Canada**

Go to <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca>

[Search Learn More About Working in BC and Canada]

## 5. Getting Help from Industry Sources

### *Industry Associations*

Associations for registered nurses in BC and Canada can provide information and assistance. Registration and fees are required for membership.

- **British Columbia Nurses' Union (BCNU)**  
<https://www.bcnu.org/>
- **British Columbia College of Nursing Professionals**  
<https://www.bccnp.ca/>
- **Canadian Nurses Association (CNA)**  
<https://www.cna-aiic.ca/>
- **Operating Room Nurses Association of Canada (ORNCA)**  
<https://ornac.ca/en/>

### *Industry Journals*

Search the Vancouver Public Library catalogue for journals related to your profession. An example includes:

- **Canadian Nurse**  
Print version available at the Central Library or online at  
<http://www.canadian-nurse.com/en>

***Questions? Please ask the Information Staff in the Central Library, Vancouver Public Library or telephone 604-331-3603.***

*Please note that the information in this guide is also available online through the Skilled Immigrant InfoCentre website at <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca>*